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# COINTELPRO CONSPIRACY AGAINST

# GERONIMO

History of
Geronimo & His
Fight for Freedom

Geronimo Pratt,
Locked Down
at San Quentin

## GERONIMO RETURNS FROM VIETNAM WAR & JOINS BPP TO STRUGGLE FOR BLACK PEOPLE'S FREEDOM IN AMERICA

Geronimo was born in a small town in Louisiana on Sept. 13, 1947. Faced with the everyday evils of southern racism and poverty, he had to set out at an early age in order to help feed, protect and support his family. Working at various jobs throughout the South, he eventually joined the Army, and by 1965 he was sent to Santa Domingo and Panama once, and twice to VietNam. During these conflicts, he was awarded two purple hearts, a silver star, two bronze stars for valor, a soldier's medal, an Army Accomandation Medal, Air Medal, three Combat Infantry Badges, and Master Paratrooper Wings. G's special training in Ranger School, the Elite Raider School of the 82nd Airborne Division, the Recon Pathfinder School of the 101st Paratroopers, and Special Forces, made him a valuable asset to the U.S. government. However, upon his release from the Army, G took his special skills to the Black Liberation Movement. He became Deputy Minister of Defense of the Black Panther Party and the highest representative of that Ministry in the First Cadre of the Central Committee, thus providing politico-military leadership to the BPP in particular and the Black Liberation Movement in general.

## U.S. GOVERNMENT COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM - "COINTELPRO" - LAUNCHES ATTACK AGAINST BLACK LIBERATION MOVEMENT

The Cointelpro operation was unleashed by the Justice Dept. via J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI to destroy the revolutionary movement in general and the Black Liberation Movement in particular. Its aim was to "destroy, prevent and neutralize the rise of a Black messiah." The targets of the FBI's "Black Nationalist-Hate Group" program included the BPP, SNCC, SCLC, CORE, Nation of Islam, Deacons for Defense & Justice, Revolutionary Action Movement, and most black student groups.

## GOVERNMENT CONCENTRATES ON ELIMINATING THE LEADERSHIP OF THE BPP, A KEY TARGET OF COINTELPRO

It was during this period (1968) when the BPP developed into a viable organization, and it was also during this period that the BPP developed potential "Black messiahs" to lead the revolutionary struggle. From coast to coast Cointelpro agents provoked armed conflicts between the BPP and other Black organizations.

> "In view of their anxieties, it is not presently felt that the Los Angeles BPP can be prompted into what could result in an internecine struggle between the two organizations ...
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> "The Los Angeles Division is aware of the mutually hostile feelings harbored between the organizations and the first opportunity to capitalize on the situation will be maximized. It is intended that US (United Slaves), Inc. will be appropriately and discreetly advised of the time and location of BPP activities in order that the two organizations might be brought together and thus grant nature the opportunity to take her due course."
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> (Memorandum from L.A. Field Office to FBI Headquarters-5/26/70, pp. 1-2.)

Thru the leaking of false information by word of mouth or by mail, the FBI planted the seeds of mistrust and suspicion. In California the running gun battles between the

BPP and the US organization (instigated by the FBI) were a prime example. This feud culminated with the assassination of John Huggins and Bunchy Carter on Jan. 17, 1969. During this period J. Edgar Hoover, in cooperation with state and local authorities, unleashed the most vicious and devious wave of assassins, agents and Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) units on the BPP in general and its leadership in particular. Countless numbers of offices were attacked across the country, great numbers of Panthers were either killed, injured or imprisoned. Within the month of Dec. '69 the DeMoines, Iowa office was bombed, Fred Hampton and Mark Clark were assassinated, and the L.A. office was attacked by 500 heavily armed SWAT members. In L.A. the state suffered a defeat at the hands of the BPP. The ability of the L.A. Panthers to survive this attack was due to the military training and discipline instilled in the BPP by Geronimo's abilities. In 1971 G and 12 others were tried and found not guilty of assault with intent to commit murder on police officers - clearly a victory for the People.

## THE SET-UP OF GERONIMO PRATT

There are thousands of comrades who were set up by Cointelpro and the judicial system to spend the rest of their lives in prison. One such comrade is Geronimo Pratt. After several government assassination attempts, in 1970 G went underground. It was then that the government labeled him a leader of the Black Liberation Army. After agents in the BPP divulged his whereabouts, the government was able to apprehend him. He was captured and brought back to L.A. While awaiting trial in the "L.A. 13" shootout case, his wife and comrade, Saundra "Red" Pratt, was murdered by agents of the state. A 9mm was placed in her vagina and the chamber was emptied, killing both Red and the 8-month-old child she was carrying in her womb. After G beat the shootout case, he was later charged and convicted of 1st degree murder for which he is presently serving a life sentence. Evidence now indicates that the murder conviction was part of the U.S. government's counterintelligence program, Cointelpro. Even though witnesses testified during his trial that he was in Oakland at the time attending a BPP Central Committee meeting and not in the L.A. area where the murder was allegedly committed, he was still convicted and sentenced to life in prison. These murder charges were not filed against him until 2-1/2 years later--after he beat his L.A. shootout trial. G was convicted in 1972 basically on the testimony of former deputy sheriff, admitted BPP informer and infiltrator Julio Butler. Butler testified that a day after the alleged murder, Pratt admitted to him that he committed the murder, and Butler then wrote a letter to a police "friend" exposing Pratt's "confession," and put the letter in a sealed envelope. The envelope was marked "open only on my death." The letter was supposedly a form of extortion to protect the informer's life. Mysteriously, this letter was opened by the police without Butler's death having taken place. The letter was admitted at trial along with Butler's testimony. State and federal authorities knew of G's role as a revolutionary leader and wanted him dead or imprisoned for life. From information gathered from an LAPD agent, we have learned that this letter and "confession" were all part of an FBI-LAPD frameup of G. It is believed that the Cointelpro criminals have records that prove this fact but withheld the information at trial. Thus the state trumped up the false charges to prevent a righteous soldier from returning to the front lines of the growing revolutionary movement. In that sense, Cointelpro succeeded in preventing the rise of a functional leader of the revolutionary struggle.

## GERONIMO KEPT IN THE "HOLE" FOR THE PAST SIX YEARS BECAUSE OF HIS POLITICAL BELIEFS

On May 26, 1976 Geronimo Pratt filed a $125,000 federal suit against officials in the California Dept. of Corrections (CDC) who have illegally imprisoned him for the past six years. G has done time in the maximum security sections of various state prisons since 1970 - prison officials continuously have fabricated charges against him and have made it impossible for him to ever expect to be released on parole. The federal suit asks that injunctions be issued to grant G his constitutional rights of due process and equal protection, which are being violated by the CDC, and that he be transferred from the hole to the mainline population. G's segregation is punitive and based entirely on his political beliefs. The CDC wants to see him killed in prison. The suit filed May 26 exposes the CDC's intentions to keep G locked down tight in California's hell-holes for as long as he is alive. The CDC wanted to avoid being deposed - and exposed - as to the real, illegal reasons G has been kept in the hole, i.e., their hatred of his political beliefs. So they began in Nov. of '76 recommending him for transfer to the mainline. This first recommendation was denied for the outrageous reason that the CDC feared possible protest by the staff. In February of '77 G was again promised a transfer to the mainline, only to be put off again for another 3 months. In the interim he was charged with possession of a marijuana cigarette--a felony for prisoners --and the charge was referred to the Marin County D.A. for prosecution, a highly unusual practice within the prison system. G and his attorney, Stuart Hanlon, alleged prejudicial prosecution in pre-trial hearings and demanded discovery of all government agency records on G and communications with the Marin County D.A. Again, faced with the threat of exposure of their conspiracy, the government dropped the charges. In April of '77 however, when the Classification Committee met again to decide on transfers to the mainline, G's recommendation for transfer was denied. G appealed the decision to Sacramento and in 30 days was again denied the transfer - with no explanation given, also a highly unusual practice within the CDC.

G MOVED TO MAX B - POLITICAL HARASSMENT CONTINUES

In June G was moved to N. Block, Max B -- not yet the mainline and more dangerous than the A.C. because of intensified racial hostilities. But for the first time in 6 years G was allowed to have contact visits, to eat in the mess hall, and to be in a cell with another person. However, the contact visits - most precious to anyone denied human contact for so long - were discontinued on 7/21/77 - and once again no reason was given. At the same time one of G's legalworkers was banned from visiting him at San Quentin because 1 she is also a legalworker for Joseph Remiro who is currently under investigation - but not charged - for an alleged escape attempt plot. She was not, however banned from visiting at Folsom where Joe is imprisoned. So now, after one month of relief from isolation, Geronimo's contact with the outside has again been severely restricted. G is the only inmate on North Block who must visit over the telephone, thru glass, while locked in a small cage, in San Quentin's "new, improved" visiting facility. The banning of G's legalworker and the illegal revocation of his attorney-client privilege by forced legal visits over the telephone, are clearly an attempt by the CDC to undermine G's ability to seek relief and release thru the courts--because he is a political prisoner.

## GERONIMO DETERMINED TO KEEP FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE

After 6-1/2 years, Geronimo is still not on the mainline, where he would have access to legal materials necessary to overturn his conviction. The May 26th prison suit to secure G his constitutional rights of due process and equal protection, and transfer to the mainline, is still active and, now more than ever, quite necessary. In addition, a Freedom of Information Act (F.O.I.A.) lawsuit must be filed to force the government to turn over the evidence it has which would prove G was falsely convicted of murder. If the government agencies fail to voluntarily give up all of their information, as they clearly are and will continue to do, actions will be brought in federal court to force them to expose the frameup of Geronimo. Then legal action will begin in state criminal court to have the frameup conviction overturned and Geronimo Pratt set free. These actions will also pave the way for other Cointelpro victims to challenge their unjust convictions and obtain their release from prison.

## WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

Keep mindful that you and I each day face the possibility of becoming a victim of circumstance as G and so many other brothers and sisters have become. In their outrage at the madness that goes on in America, they dared to stand up to fight--Won't you dare to support them? In our efforts to bring attention and justice to the many forgotten brothers and sisters behind the walls of prisons throughout the state of California and the entire nation, we need your help. There is much work to do and much support needed. If you have time, we can use it - If you have suggestions,, we can use them - If you have money, we can use it, for the exhaustive legal expenses and costs of publicity. Won't you please help. Don't forget Geronimo and these brothers and sisters who we want to help are people who were fighting for the freedom of our People. In their attempts to speak out against the racism and oppression of poor people, they have been incarcerated by those who would stifle our struggle towards a better world for all. TO HELP, PLEASE CONTACT:

Geronimo Defense.
c/o 294 Page Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

## CHRONOLOGICAL SKETCH OF CONTINUING

1968 - G is discharged from the Army and joins the BPP

1969 - Jan. 17 Bunchy Carter and John Huggins killed in FBI-instigated assassination - G takes over as Deputy Minister of Defense

Dec. 4 Fred Hampton and Mark Clark assassinated by government in Chicago during predawn raid on BPP

Dec. 8 Government forces (SWAT) launch unsuccessful assassination attempt on L.A. BPP, including Geronimo and his wife and comrade Red, in predawn attack

1970 - August To prevent further assassination attempts, G goes underground = shortly thereafter government informant's letter inplicating G in 12/18/68 murder "turns up"

Dec. 4 Secret grand jury indicts G for 12/18/68 L.A. murder

Dec. 8 With the help of FBI informant in the BPP, G is captured in Texas

1971 - Summer "L.A. 13" shootout trial on attempted murder charges stemming from 12/8/69 SWAT assault, begins

November While G still on trial in "L.A. 13" case, his wife and comrade Saundra "Red" is assassinated

December All "L.A. 13" defendants acquitted of conspiracy to commit murder charges

1972 - Jan. 21 G placed in Adex file, Category I - special government classification to remove certain people from the streets during "national emergency" - G still in jail on other charges at this time

June G stands trial for 12/18/68 murder charge

July G convicted and sentenced to life in prison, largely on basis of informant Julio Butler's testimony

# COINTELPRO CONSPIRACY AGAINST "G"

1973 - FBI Bureau in L.A. conducts continuing investigation on G after he has been sentenced to life in prison

1974 - February FBI in L.A. continues investigation of G because they believe he might be involved in "rebellion and insurrection" activities

March G charged with plot to hijack Folsom schoolbus while in Folsom prison - allegations later deemed false by CDC, but remain on his record

1975 - January G implicated in stabbing of guard at San Quentin, but no charges filed

1976 - May 26 Prison suit filed against CDC for keeping G locked down in the hole because of his political beliefs

November G recommended for transfer to mainline but turned down because CDC "fears possible protest of staff."

1977 - February Classification Committee once again postpones G's transfer to mainline

March G charged with possession of marijuana cigarette - charges later dismissed because state fears G's "prejudicial prosecution" defense

April G turned down for a third time on move to the mainline - after 30-day appeal to Sacramento he is denied transfer again with no reason given

June G moved to North Block, has contact visits for the first time in 6-1/2 years

July G's contact visits cut off with no reason given - one of his legalworkers banned, all visits now conducted over telephone thus illegally revoking his attorney-client privilege